

# PUFFER'S POND PUBLIC FORUMS—

## *What will the Pond and surrounding area look like in 2020?*

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**When:** Saturday, October 24th at 1:00 p.m.

**Where:** Meeting Room, North Congregational Church

**When:** Thursday, October 29th at 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** Glass Room, Bangs Community Center

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Puffer's Pond and its surrounding conservation area is a beloved resource in Town. The Puffer's Pond 2020 (PP 2020) committee is working on plans to preserve its future and is looking for your input: PP 2020 is sponsoring two public forums on the use and future of the pond and surrounding conservation areas – we hope you can come on either Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the North Congregational Church or Thursday evening October 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Glass Room at the Bangs Community Center, to share with us your experiences and ideas and then to stay and learn a little of its history from the Conservation Director's point of view. We will be collecting into our database your observations on current uses of the Pond and surrounding conservation areas to help get a clear picture of how the resource satisfies the needs of the Town, on challenges and inappropriate uses, and on bright ideas for its future. Your input and opinions will be added to the questionnaire results to inform our work. (Check out [www.amherstma.gov](http://www.amherstma.gov) if you would like to fill out a questionnaire.)

The Puffer's Pond 2020 committee was formed by the Conservation Commission this summer to help tackle the difficult issues that arise from increasingly heavy use of the Pond and nearby conservation areas. The committee is made up of Amherst residents as well as representatives from the Select Board, Planning Board, LSSE Commission and the Conservation Commission. The committee will be publishing a report next spring with recommendations and strategies that will guide the Town in sustaining this valuable resource.

We look forward to your joining us at one of these forums and helping create a healthy vision of Puffer's Pond in the next decade and beyond.



# ***Puffer's Pond 2020 Committee***

## ***Committee Charge***

The Conservation Commission creates *Puffer's Pond 2020—A Plan For The Future* to consider options for the use, restoration, beautification, and preservation of Puffer's Pond and surrounding conservation lands, including the Mill River/Cushman Brook Greenway. The committee shall study the various aspects of the Pond and Greenway between Rt. 63 and Leverett Road with a particular focus on conservation and recreation, ecology, land use, water quality, and environmental health, and shall make recommendations to the Conservation Commission in the form of a final report. The committee may conduct site visits, hold public meetings, and may conduct one public/user comment survey to assess and determine current conditions of the Pond and surrounding area to help determine appropriate resolutions and future actions. The Committee shall prioritize the strategies recommended. The Committee shall prepare a report to the Conservation Commission on or before April 30, 2010. The Committee shall be composed of up to eleven (11) voting members appointed by the Conservation Commission for a term to expire July 1, 2010. One Member shall be from the Select Board, one Member from the Planning Board and one Member from the LSSE Commission. Prospective at-large Members shall be residents of Amherst and must complete a Citizen Activity Form to be considered for the committee. The committee shall be a public committee subject to the Open Meeting Law. Public participation is encouraged.

## ***Committee Members***

- **HAMIN, Elisabeth**– *Chair*
- **ANGUS, Briony** – *Conservation Commission Rep.*
- **GAGE, Meg**
- **HAYDEN, Aaron** – *Select Board Rep.*
- **JONES, Emlen**
- **MUSKA, Paris**
- **PATULAK, James** – *LSSE Rep.*
- **PISTRANG, James**
- **SHOPPER, Evan**
- **WEBBER, David** – *Planning Board Rep.*

## ***Staff Liaisons***

***David Ziomek, Director of Conservation & Development***

***Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner***

***David McKinnon, Assistant Land Manager***

## ***Contact Information:***

***(413) 259-3045      [conservation@amherstma.gov](mailto:conservation@amherstma.gov)***



***Please complete an online survey if you would like to provide the committee with information: <http://www.amherstma.gov/forms.aspx?fid=141>***



## ***'Fun Facts' about Puffer's Pond***

***Size of Pond: 11 Acres with an average depth of 5' and maximum depth of 20'***

***Size of Mill River Recreation-Puffer's Pond Greenway: 120 Acres***

***Responsible Entity: solely the Conservation Commission (M.G.L. Ch.40 § 8c)***

***Estimated Annual Visitation: 10,000***

***Maximum Daily Visitor Count: 550+***

***Online: Puffer's Pond is a popular destination on <http://www.swimmingholes.org>***

***Water Quality: Consistently below state levels for e.coli***

***Date of Last Dredging: 1986 and removed 100,000 cubic yards***

***Fundraising: Friends of Puffer's Pond raises approximately \$4,000 annually***

***The Dam: built ca. 1895, a masonry structure that 'weeps' and has a maximum height of almost 33 feet.***

***Mill Activity: at the industrial peak, up to two mills lined the Mill River and Cushman Brook in North Amherst.***

***Ice-Making: The Puffer family harvested and delivered ice from the pond for nearly thirty years, until the early 1940's. The ice house was located on what is now South Beach.***



**Puffer's Pond Public Forum--October 24, 2009**  
**Family Center, North Congregational Church 1:00 p.m.**

<b>Pond</b>	
concern	Water quality
concern	sedimentation
concern	plant growth
concern	Erosion/Beaver
concern	dredging
concern	boating/kayaking regulations
love	fishing (from shore)
love	Swimming across pond
<b>Road</b>	
idea	Regulated parking @ Pond
idea	close road (State St)
idea	pedestrian mall
idea	bike path
idea	Other expanded parking
idea	Gravel Pit parking area
concern	Dangerous road/corner by dam
concern	walking
concern	parking
concern	possible increase traffic/parking @ Pulpit Hill
concern	Mill River Area Parking
<b>Beach</b>	
Idea	Should dogs be allowed at all
Idea	Make beach larger
Idea	Regulate use more
Idea	More signs (Beware of snapping turtles)
Concern	Too many dogs (at the wrong time)
Concern	Dog walkers don't respect rules
Concern	Too many people
Concern	Visitors from out of town
Concern	Better beach maintenance
Concern	but not too much
Concern	Pond is being loved to death
<b>Paths</b>	
Idea	need regulation
Idea	Explanation as to their damage might improve compliance
Idea	Add trails to access swimming holes upstream from Pond
Idea	might decrease pressure on Pond itself
Concern	Walking all the way around Pond requires walking on the road which is dangerous
Concern	Trail maintenance
Concern	Poison Ivy
Concern	Snakes
Concern	Ad-hoc trails, notably from Pulpit Hill
Concern	indicate desire
Love	(View from) bridge
<b>General Ideas</b>	
Operations	More staff
Operations	Rest rooms
Operations	Close State Street East of Sand Hill rd
Operations	Move main beach to the north side of Pond or west to other point
Operations	More parking
Use	"Develop" North Beach area for picnicking and swimming
Use	Complete the trail to go all the way around the Pond
Use	Extend greenway corridor even so far as into neighboring towns
Use	Set up interpretive activities
Use	Allow nude bathing after 10pm
Revenue	Get service organizations involved in caring for th Pond area; scouts, etc
Revenue	Tikki Bar on the dam
Revenue	Get Umass outing clubs involved in caring for the Pond area.
Revenue	Revenue generating events
Revenue	Charge for parking
Revenue	Micro-hydro for dam
Revenue	Business sponsorship of trails

**Puffer's Pond Public Forum--October 29, 2009**  
**Bangs Community Center 7-9 p.m.**

<b>Trails and Rivers</b>		
Concern	river bank erosion	
Concern	beaver damage	
Concern	trash @ 'swimming holes	
<b>Beaches</b>		
Idea	buoy system by dam	
Idea	safety @ cliffs	
Idea	more permanent restrooms	
<b>North Beach</b>		
	Opportunity	offset pressure on South Beach
	Opportunity	bigger
	Opportunity	keep n. beach gate (always open on a regular schedule)
	Opportunity	draw more people
	Concern	smokers
	Concern	noise
	Idea	signage--smoking, garbage, reason for staying off of some areas
	Idea	safety @ south beach--railroad ties, rebar
	Idea	Fees-charge for out-of-towners
	Idea	resident permits
	Idea	unregulated/ free beaches and trails
<b>Road/ Parking</b>		
Idea	parking development @ pulpit hill	
Idea	accessbile parking at North Beach	
Idea	further develop existing lost on N. Beach	
Concern	liability with parking issues	
Concern	expansion of parking may affect birding	
Idea	seasonal parking permits	
Idea	adequate parking "embracing as a public space	
<b>State Street</b>		
	Idea	marked parking
	Idea	limit parking spaces
	Idea	one way
	Idea	angled parking spaces
<b>Pond</b>		
Concern	lack of supervision	
	safety issues--especially around dam	
Concern	silting in	
Concern	stability of dam	
Concern	water-weeds	
Concern	town liability	
Concern	danger of diving/jumpin off cliffs	
Concern	conflic between swimmers and fishers	
Idea	sediment traps	
Idea	make it harder to access cliff and dam	
Idea	better signage	
Idea	accept/embrace as a public space--do what is necessary re. safety, etc.	
Idea	state park	
Idea	work days--get people involved	